1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

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Conversation

[Frontispiece, facing p. iii]

585 292 fustanélla and tights, and, disappointingly, pointed black towny shoes. His face, rather a commonplace one for a Sarakatsán, was a mask of confused virile seriousness. In only one thing did his [531] outfit differ from the full-dress Greek mountain costume: black woolen armlets, embroidered with specifically Sarakatsán geometric zigzags, encased his forearms below the wide white sleeves which ended at his elbow.

585 Despite the chaos in the church, the marriage service evolved unperturbed. The two enormous ribboned candles were held by minute shepherd boys, like the lances of heraldic supporters, on either side of a little altar in the body of the nave. The *koumbaras* switched the flimsy white flower crowns from head to head in a succession of intricate passes and arranged and rearranged their hands and bound them with ribbon and performed yet more complex manipulations with the ring, and followed them in kissing the bossy silver binding of the proffered missal. Finally he accompanied them, hand in hand, led by the priest under a fusillade of flung rice and sweets, in a slow and dignified dance thrice around the altar. This is a kind of hieratic pavane, which more than any other moment in the solemnization (for the wine that the priest offers to the bridal couple is no more than a commemoration of the wedding at Cana of Galilee) hallows and confirms the sacrament.

Out in the sunlight, all was levity, flourished banners, and gunfire again. We made our way through the wigwams to the house which the groom's father, striking modern roots in his winter pastures, had recently built. As the newly wed couple reached the threshold, someone handed the groom a sieve, which he threw over his shoulder, a measure which is said to forfend marital discord. They both kissed the hand of the groom's father and laid it to their foreheads for a second and [123] vanished indoors. My new friend of yesterday, [574] Barba Petro, introduced us to this pastoral dynast, who welcomed us with the same graceful inclination, with his hand laid on his breast, and led us in.

[352] There were already plenty of guests there, both on the low divan which ran around the room and cross-legged on the mats which padded the floor; [539] and at each new arrival, while black-swathed aunts and grandmothers offered the newcomers saucers with a spoonful of jam, a glass of water, and a thimbleful of raki, they intoned a welcoming song: "Mother, our friends have come," they sang, "our bidden guests. Bid them welcome with ● [516] honey and sugar and with golden words." Some sat with hands linked around their doubled-up

knees, others leaned back against the wall or the divan with a knee cocked up to support an outstretched arm, their fingers allowing the amber beads of a *kombolói* to fall at intervals of a few seconds. All were luxuriously asprawl and akimbo, and the company bristled with shepherd's crooks. They were laid across their laps or tilted at a slope over their shoulders. Some of the shepherds' crooks, staffs grasped by gnarled fists, stood bolt upright; others were propped against the wall; the top of each well-worn shaft was joined to a twirling hook carved in the shape of a dolphin, a dragon, a ram's head, or a snake.

Only a couple of the guests were dressed in black kilts. The others wore rough and hairy black jodhpurs. A few of the wildest and shaggiest were shod in rawhide moccasins tilting up like canoes, worn over swaths of white wool bound about their ankles with broad thongs. All of them wore their soft black skullcaps rakishly askew. Except for the white and pleated bridegroom, who stood by the door receiving horny handshakes and whiskery embraces from the guests, nearly all the people in the room were middle-aged or stricken in years. They conversed at the top of their voices; used to shouting against the wind to each other from hilltop to hilltop, they find it hard to modulate their voices at close quarters, so the smallest talk is stentorian, and the only alternative is a collusive and almost inaudible whisper, to which they suddenly resort if they notice a look of suffering on their interlocutor's face.

THEIR thick rural tones sounded different from those of Thrace. They resembled, rather, the dialect of Roumeli and of parts of Epirus, much further west; an accent which consists of suppressing all final vowels and most of those in the middle of words as well, giving their speech an oddly chopped and consonantal ring. It was made harder to follow by a private vocabulary for the details of their calling. Different kinds of springs, qualities of grass, ways of hut building and bell tuning, breeds of sheep and goats and horses and watchdogs all have special names. They have their own expressions for the tupping, lambing, weaning, shearing, carding, spinning, milking, seething, scalding, path finding, tent pitching, camp striking, trough scooping, and weather divining around which their whole life turns. How should a layman know that the reddish- or dark-faced sheep are called *Katsoúla*, or that belling them is called "ironing" or "arming" them? Or how many *okas* of bronze, and of what pitch, should be slung around the neck of a bellwether? Or that the best time to arm the flocks

/31 cont'/

352 Small stools: This type of furniture has made its appearance recently

Fig. 5

among the Sarakatsani, in imitation of peasant furniture. In any case it is a very simple stool (fig. 5).

[516] The generally accepted custom is that everybody squats or stretches out on the ground in front of the hearth on covers spread directly on the ground of the hut. Beds are unknown.

[342] In other respects the interior of the hut itself solves the problem of the indispensible /32/ furniture to hold objects. The walls, in fact, provide a kind of bench or shelf. (6)

6. See below, the section devoted to the dwelling, pp. 90-92.

415 [128] Since furniture is limited to these few objects, we shall go onto examine the utensils made by the Sarakatsani, which we shall categorize according to their use.

Utensils used in making bread

[322] [824] The kneading trough, a type of large receptacle carved out of a heavy piece of solid wood (trunk of holly) in which bread is kneaded (fig. 6).

The pinakotti: this is a very thick board that has six to eight

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286 This instrument is used for the most important of the operations preliminary to weaving, namely the warping, and its function is to prevent the thread from tangling when one prepares the warp of the loom.

In this connection it is perhaps necessary to mention that to mount the warp they use five pegs. However, the latter do not have any special interest from the point of view of "construction."

236 There is the carding tool, which serve to comb out the strands of wool after washing. It consists of two rectangular boards each of which has, /41/ on one of its sides, a certain number of metal needles (points), while on the free surface one sees, respectively, on one of the boards a handle and, on the other, a rope 60 centimeters

Fig. 28

Fig. 29

long which ends in a wooden cylinder to which it is attached. Drawing No. 29 shows both this instrument and how it is used. (see also fig. 28).

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233 (the time when milking stops), milking takes place around noon, that
234 is to say, once a day. However, the intervals become progressively
221 more spread out, inasmuch as the production of milk decreases as the season advances; thus, toward the 15th of August milking is done only every two or three days.

236 /95/ As for shearing, everything relating to it has already been pointed out in connection with the wool crafts. Hence we shall not go back over it here.

262 Finally, we must emphasize that the meat is almost exclusively
439 a means of trade for the Sarakatsani, since they eat it only five

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Fig. 75

262 or six times a year. On very rare occasions they "sacrifice" a lamb.
[439] This is their own expression, and it is a sufficient indication of their attitude with regard to this act.

233 Likewise, they never kill female animals (except when these are
[262] sterile) because it is precisely on the female that their economy rests.
[432] The male lambs are the ones which, after 40 days, are gradually

583 /137 cont./
585 --In your new dwelling you must conduct yourself
602 In impeccable fashion and bright
533 As the sun and the moon...
539 You must prostrate yourself,
562 You must honor your mother-in-law.
And all the relatives of your husband,
If you wish to be honored by all
And thought well of in the entire world...

562 583 585 602 261 [516] Third, the wife is the only individual who does not take part in the wedding feast. Withdrawn in a corner, her head lowered to show her submission and her piety, fixed in a "modest pose," she must above all take care not to consume anything whatever. In addition for three days, custom has imposed on her a regime of strict abstinence so that her physiological needs stop. Carrying them out would constitute an insult to her new family.

583 585 602 593 562 [178] Fourthly, the wife is all alone when she makes her permanent departure from her paternal home. None of her relatives accompany her. Her /138/ family attend neither the celebration of the marriage nor the banquet. According to some, her parents organize a banquet at their house. According to others, they do not celebrate the marriage of their daughter, but rather take on an attitude of mourning. It seems that the first version reflects most recent practices, while the second relates to former times. What is certain is that the wife must, along with her husband, pay a visit to her relatives eight days after the marriage. However, it may very well be that this visit does not recur again subsequently, especially if the respective kin groups of her husband and her parents migrate to regions far apart from one another. One even tells of a Sarakatsani woman who did not have an opportunity to see her paternal family again for 30 years.

593 562 594 We note therefore that the uprooting of the wife from her family, her absolute submission to her husband and to the latter's kin and the domination that her husband exerts over her are indisputable. An anecdote

/372 cont./

000 the blaze of their grief, but this fire won't be extinguished."

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534 We should like to conclude this brief chapter with a description of the musical instruments of the Sarakatsani, which are simply variations of the flute. Our herders call them tzamara and tziradi. They either make them themselves or else they buy them commercially.

[804] The tzamara is a very long flute measuring 12 "palms" (approximately 90 centimeters--the Sarakatsani use the palm of the hand as a unit of measure), made of a hollow tube of wood, more rarely of metal, pierced with several holes upon which the fingers are set to vary the frequencies. There are seven of these holes. We shall call them "main holes" to distinguish them from the others. One of the two ends of the tube is used as the mouthpiece. On the other end there are three holes arranged in a triangle which are on a line with the main holes. At the height of the first main hole, but diametrically opposite, there is an orifice that /the player's/ close with the thumb; there is another opposite the hole which forms the summit of the triangle. This last one is called "the devil's hole" because it is the "devil who conceived it," while the one stopped with the thumb is "the work of Jesus Christ." This [793] in accordance with a Sarakatsani legend that says the first tzamara was made during the resurrection of Christ. And the devil, vexed, tried to damage it by /373/ /Figure 108 appears here/ /374/ piercing it at the place we have just indicated. However, thanks to the intervention of Christ who pierced it higher up, the sound of the instrument became better and the devil burst with fury.

[533] The sound of the tzamara is soft and deep. The musician must play [516] seated because of the length of the instrument (fig. 108) which is also called floyéra, a common name in Greece for all shepherd flutes. /Figure 109 appears here/

3: Kabbadias--435 E-4,5 (no date) 1965 EH14 Sarakatsani EH14

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Fig. 168